

March 10, 2022 – EMPIRE VILLAGE COUNCIL WORK SESSION

The meeting was called to order at the Empire Township Hall and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Davis at 7:00 p.m. Upon a roll call, Council members Bacon, Barr, Chase, Davis, Dye, Palmer and Rademacher were present. Clerk Smith was also present.

CHANGES/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA – Rademacher added Water Rate Discussion under New Business. Davis removed Clarification of Financial Reports.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA - Motion by Bacon, support by Barr to approve the agenda as amended. Upon a voice vote, MOTION PASSED.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS - None.

COUNCIL MEMBER/COMMITTEE REPORTS – Bacon offered to answer any questions about the Tree Committee minutes and Rademacher noted the Water Committee minutes.

OLD BUSINESS

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN – Bacon described her summary of the history of developing the

CIP in Empire. She also noted that the documentation provided was a compilation of materials from MI Municipal League and the MI Dept. of Treasury. There was discussion of the definitions for cost of improvement, how realistic are the projects on the current CIP, and the annual surplus funds (including a 5-year average) that might be set aside for improvements. Davis suggested that the committees meet and review the CIP for each fund. There was discussion of a deadline for committee recommendation. There was consensus that such committee recommendations be available for the August work session.

NEW BUSINESS

EMPIRE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ROAD CLOSURES REQUEST – There was discussion of closing the first block of Front St. west of M22. It was noted that last year that request was refused. There was consensus that the portion of Front St. to be closed should be from LaRue to Union Streets only. There was discussion of golf carts on sidewalks and a large vehicle taking up six parking places on Front. The lack of details and whether the emergency plan submitted to the County could be shared with the Village was also discussed. There was consensus that the request be added to the Regular meeting for consideration.

WATER CROSS CONTROL PROGRAM

ORDINANCE – Proposed changes to the Ordinance were noted in red.

POLICY – The different requirements for Inspection vs Testing were reviewed. The requirements for sprinkler systems were reviewed. There was consensus that both the Policy and the Ordinance be added to the Regular meeting agenda and a Public Hearing be scheduled at 7:00 p.m. on March 22, 2022.

PERSONNEL POLICY – Bacon introduced the Draft Policy, reviewed changes, and requested feedback for the committee. The increased number of paid holidays were discussed. There was clarification that employee positions, DPW Superintendent, DPW Technician, Deputy Clerk/Office Administrator, and Zoning Administrator, are covered by this policy. Elected and appointed Village Officers are not employees, and this policy would not apply. The difference between Exempt and Non-exempt employees was reviewed. Comments will be sent to the Personnel Committee to be discussed at the April work session.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN – Bacon reviewed the Transportation Plan process as detailed in the document provided. Input will be solicited from several agencies, as well as the Council, before a final plan is returned to the Council for approval. Comments regarding bike path markings, sharrows and wayfinding were shared with Bacon for Planning Commission consideration. Additional comments should be shared by the April work session.

RESOLUTION No.7 of 2022 – compliance with 2011 PA 152 – There was discussion and clarification of the resolution wording. If a municipality offers health insurance, they must choose 1 of 3 options and convey to the State via a resolution. There was consensus that this be added to the Regular meeting for consideration.

DIRECT DEPOSIT FOR PAYCHECKS – There was consensus that this be placed on the Regular meeting agenda for permission to distribute to all persons receiving paychecks.

WATER RATE STUDY – Rademacher reviewed the results of the water study received from Gosling Czubak. Discussion included: raising the rates in stages rather than an immediate significant increase, increase in the hook-up fee, change in the late fee charge, and assistance for payment of water bills. The price and sizing of a new generator was reviewed. There will be further discussion of the study at the April work session. Gosling Czubak will be asked to attend and help clarify the required and discretionary improvements, and the rates required to complete them.

PUBLIC COMMENT - None.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENT – Palmer asked when Revenue & Expenditure reports will be available. Bacon felt there was full transparency to the public about our finances every month.

ADJOURNMENT at 8:50 p.m.

Derith Smith Empire Village Clerk

These minutes were approved at the March 22, 2022, Regular Council meeting.